

# Livestock estimates, January 1, 2024

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On January 1, 2024, Canadian cattle, hog and sheep inventories were down compared with the same date one year earlier.

The Canadian cattle herd fell to the lowest level since January 1, 1989. Record average producer prices of Canadian cattle and calves, drought conditions, and tight feed supply continued to put downward pressure on the cattle sector, and producers responded by sending breeding stock to feedlots.

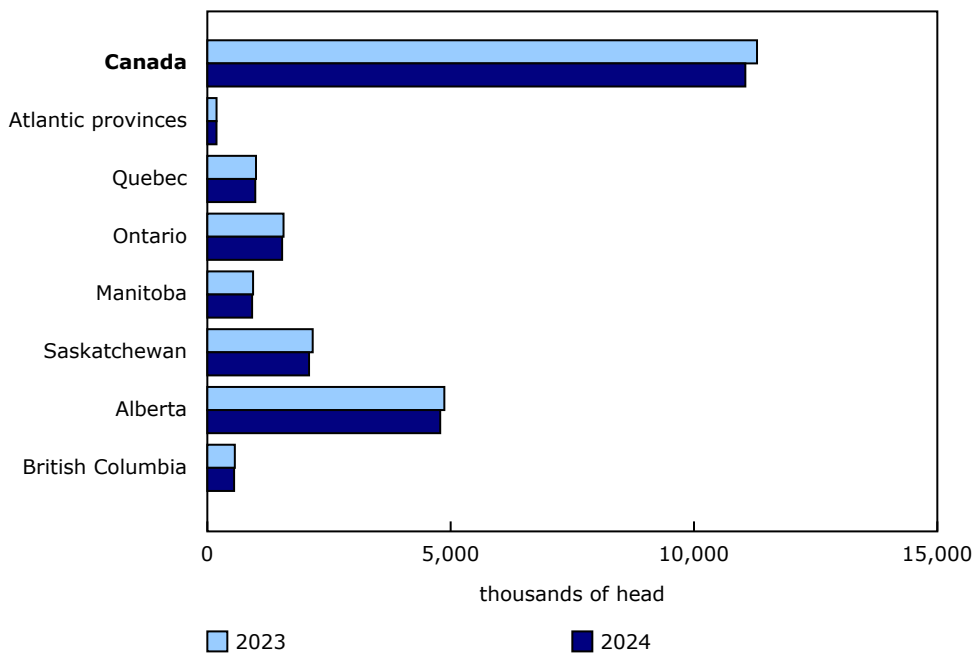
Canadian hog inventories fell for the second consecutive year on January 1, 2024, hindered by rising feed costs, labour shortages, reduced processing capacity, and international market issues, especially in Eastern Canada.

On January 1, Canadian sheep inventories declined year over year for the first time since January 1, 2020. Average producer prices of slaughter lambs have weakened since the strong prices during 2021 and early 2022. Lower prices and increased feed costs have contributed to the decline of inventories in the sector.

## Cattle and calves

Canadian farmers held 11.1 million cattle and calves on their farms on January 1, 2024, down 2.1% from the same date the previous year and the smallest cattle herd size since January 1, 1989. However, in 2022, average warm carcass weights of cattle increased 18.0% compared with 1999, helping offset any decline in beef production over that period.

**Chart 1**  
Total cattle inventories, January 1, 2023, and January 1, 2024



Source(s): Table 32-10-0130-01.

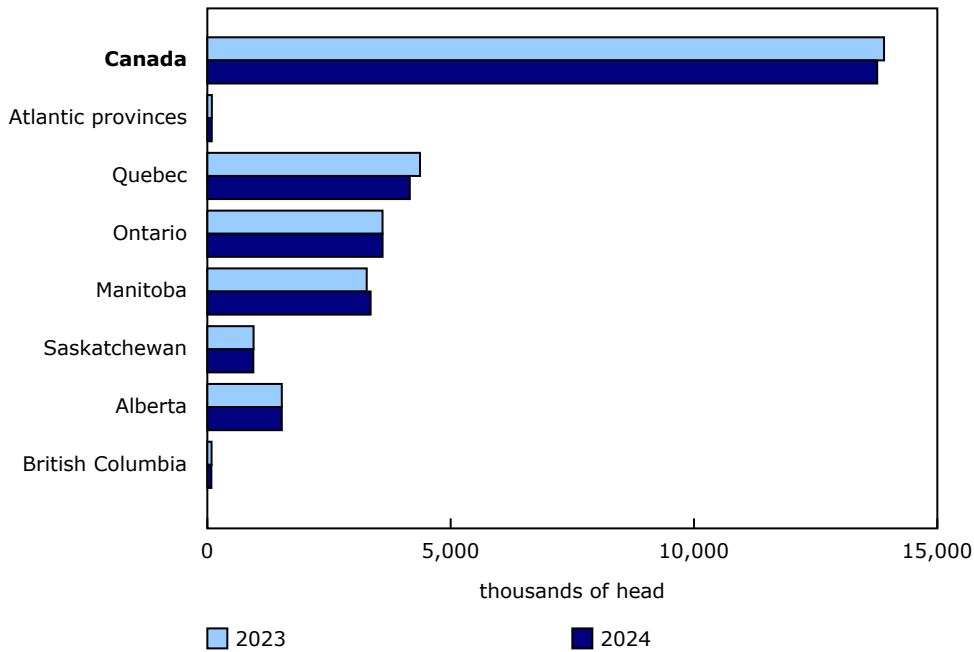
Canadian cattle producers retained less breeding stock on January 1, 2024, with year-over-year decreases observed in all breeding stock categories. Producers held fewer feeder heifers (-0.7%), steers (-0.2%) and calves (-3.0%) compared with January 1, 2023.

From July to December 2023, the total disposition of cattle and calves was up 0.9% compared with July to December 2022, while total supply was down 1.5%. From July to December 2023, international imports of cattle and calves declined 25.7% to 153,400 head, and international exports of cattle and calves increased 14.0% to 389,200 head.

## Hogs

Canadian hog producers reported 13.8 million hogs on their farms on January 1, 2024, down 1.0% from the same date one year earlier. Quebec's hog inventories declined 4.8% amid the closure of a Quebec pork plant and herd-reducing program payments, while Manitoba's inventories increased 2.4% year over year.

**Chart 2**  
**Total hog inventories, January 1, 2023, and January 1, 2024**



Source(s): Table 32-10-0160-01.

On January 1, 2024, hog producers reported 1.2 million sows and gilts (-2.2%), and the number of boars decreased by 3.1% year over year to 15,500 head.

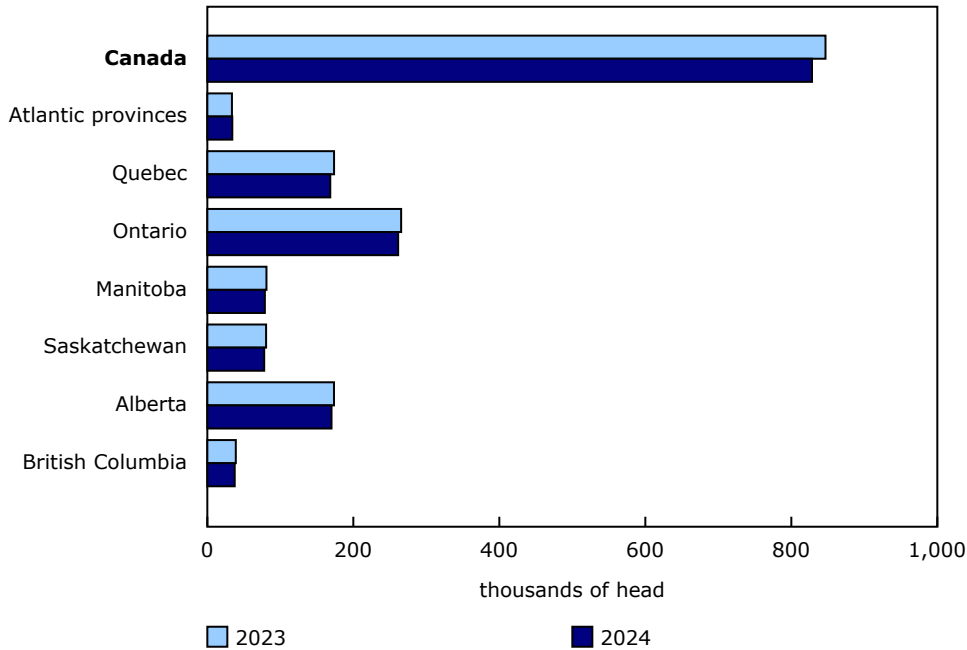
From July to December 2023, the total hog slaughter increased 1.0% to 10.9 million head, and international exports of live hogs increased 7.4% to 3.4 million head during the same period.

The pig crop, which represents the number of live piglets after weaning, rose to 14.9 million from July to December 2023, a 2.0% increase compared with July to December 2022.

## Sheep and lambs

On January 1, 2024, Canadian inventories of sheep and lambs were down 2.2% year over year to 828,300 head.

**Chart 3**  
**Total sheep inventories, January 1, 2023, and January 1, 2024**



Source(s): Table 32-10-0129-01.

On January 1, 2024, the sheep breeding herd declined 2.3% year over year to 599,300 head, as inventories of ewes (-2.4%), rams (-0.8%) and replacement lambs (-2.0%) decreased. Inventories of market lambs declined 2.0% year over year to 229,000 head. For the second half of 2023 (July to December), sheep and lamb slaughter decreased 1.2% year over year to 382,600 head.

For the July to December 2023 period, international exports of live sheep and lambs decreased 38.0% year over year, down to 8,000 head. Meanwhile, international imports of live sheep dropped to zero.

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### Note to readers

Livestock estimates are available for Canada and the provinces, as well as those for hogs and pigs and sheep and lambs for the United States. Estimates for cattle and calves for the United States will be available on March 5, 2024.

### Intercensal revisions

Following the release of the 2021 Census of Agriculture data in May 2022, intercensal revisions to the Livestock Estimates data for years 2016 to 2021 are now available.

### PigTRACE data

As of the January to June 2017 period, this release uses administrative data collected by the Canadian Pork Council (CPC) to estimate interprovincial hog imports and exports, defined as the movement of pigs to a different province for non-slaughter purposes. This approach is in line with Statistics Canada's [AgZero initiative](#), which aims to produce high-quality estimates using models, administrative data and other non-traditional survey-based approaches.

Since July 1, 2014, reporting to PigTRACE is mandatory by law for all people and organizations participating in the movement of pigs. It is, however, recognized that if premises do not report their movements to the CPC, there may be undercoverage in the PigTRACE estimates. Adjustments may be applied to the PigTRACE estimates in cases of known or suspected undercoverage.

### Random tabular adjustment

The random tabular adjustment (RTA) technique, which aims to increase the amount of data made available to users while protecting the confidentiality of respondents, was applied to the estimates derived from PigTRACE hog movement reports.

Statistics Canada typically uses suppression techniques to protect sensitive statistical information. These techniques involve suppressing data points that can directly or indirectly reveal information about a respondent. This can often lead to the suppression of a large number of data points and significantly reduce the amount of available data.

Using RTA, Statistics Canada can identify sensitive estimates and randomly adjust their value rather than suppress them. The size of the adjustment is calculated to protect respondent confidentiality. After adjusting the value, the agency assigns a quality measure (A, B, C, D or E) to the estimate to indicate the degree of confidence that users can have in its accuracy.

For more information on RTA, please refer to the article "[Random Tabular Adjustment is here!](#)," available as part of the StatCan Blog.

For the latest information on the Census of Agriculture, visit the [Census of Agriculture](#) portal.

For more information on agriculture and food, visit the [Agriculture and food statistics](#) portal.

**Available tables:** [32-10-0125-01](#), [32-10-0126-01](#), [32-10-0129-01](#), [32-10-0130-01](#), [32-10-0139-01](#), [32-10-0141-01](#), [32-10-0143-01](#), [32-10-0151-01](#), [32-10-0160-01](#) and [32-10-0200-01](#) to [32-10-0204-01](#) .

**Definitions, data sources and methods:** survey number [3460](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)) or Media Relations ([statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca)).